

science is chiefly concerned, but also the spiritual laws that are still above them and that obtain in all human relations. The injunctions and inhibitions of Buddhism derive their authority ultimately from the *Dharma*, with which abstract Buddhahood itself is identified as the *Dharma-Kaya*. After centuries of internecine strife the leading Christian nations of the world are attempting to conclude a treaty for permanent peace. Buddhism forestalled this anti-war declaration more than two thousand years ago by the very first of its commandments. And positively interpreted, this inhibition is the basis of all virtues—mercy, piety, loyalty, friendship, charity, moderation, and even self-sacrifice,—for these can manifest themselves as occasion arises if only one knows how to value life in obedience to the highest spiritual laws. Furthermore, knowing the value of life does not necessarily involve the cowardly fear of death, since physical death sometimes becomes necessary to keep one's spiritual life inviolate. On the other hand, spiritual life may be ingloriously extinguished before the end of one's earthly career, or it may be kept alive and pure years after bodily death. Were proofs called for, let me cite here only three—Buddha, Christ, and Confucius, who are all more alive to-day than many a living priest, philosopher or moralist.

Returning now to the Buddhist teaching of self-conquest, which is the reverse of the modern Occidental tendency towards self-assertion (the apparent cause of the present ascendancy of the white man), let me point out that this, also, is positive in the spirit. The European War has shown that the result of every nation aspiring to beat every other nation in armaments and commerce can only be mutual destruction. Thinkers in the West have come to realize the paramount importance of co-operation not only in social relationship but also among nations; and efficient co-operation can only be secured when each individual is willing to subordinate himself to the whole for the well-being of all. Self-conquest in Buddhism, be it remembered, does not mean self-abandonment or self-abasement. It means the suppression of the minor self for the liberation of the inner soul and the attainment of complete union or re-union with the Spirit of the Universe. Indeed, without this profound background—the Mysterious Essence of All Things—the principles of Buddhism, valuable as they certainly are as rules of daily conduct, would be commonplace in comparison with the esotericism of many another system of philosophy or ethics. Without the recognition, explicit or implied, of this Infinite Cause, all such Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as Amitabha ("Amida" in Japanese), Maha Vairocana ("Dainchi"), Avalokitesvara ("Kwannon"), and others so deeply adored by Japanese Buddhists would be in danger of descending to the level of mythological deities or idols. Only when recognized as symbolic incarnations or visible manifestations of the Infinite will they win the heartfelt veneration of the modern mind. But of this great subject, of the relation of the concrete to the abstract, of the symbol to what it symbolizes, of individual Buddhas to abstract Buddhahood, I may treat more at length in a future article.

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